

Sealed Document Procedures

A. Motions to Seal

- (1) All files in the possession of the Court are considered to be public documents available for inspection unless otherwise ordered. Motions to seal are discouraged.
- (2) A motion to seal may be made on an *ex parte* basis without notice on any grounds permitted by law and must contain the basis for why sealing is required. Attorneys filing a motion to seal without proper justification are subject to sanctions.
- (3) All motions to seal must be filed in CM/ECF as a public document, and redacted as needed. Documents affected by the request to file under seal must be sealed and hand-delivered to the court. They will remain sealed until the court rules on the motion.
- (4) If the court denies the motion to seal, the documents will be returned under seal to the movant.
- (5) Upon the entry of an order to seal, a viewable flag (“SEALEDDOC”) will appear on the docket sheet, and the sealed envelope will have the name and address of the party seeking the sealing and the date of the order for sealing.
- (6) A document whose seal is vacated by court order before a case is closed will be imaged and filed in CM/ECF as a public document.

B. Sealed documents at case closing

- (1) Upon the administrative closing of the case and the expiration of all delays for appeal, the courtroom deputy will send a letter to the movant with a thirty (30) day deadline requesting instructions on whether to destroy or return sealed documents to the movant. The letter will be entered in CM/ECF.
- (2) The movant will docket instructions in CM/ECF as to whether the original sealed document should be returned to the movant or

destroyed. (The event code can be found under “Bankruptcy or Adversary Other Events”: “Attorney’s Statement to Clerk’s office re: Sealed Documents” (misc,stmtsdoc)). *See attached Instructions to Clerk Regarding Document Under Seal.*

- (3) Failure by the movant to respond to the notice within thirty (30) days will result in the destruction of the sealed document or documents by the Clerk.
- (4) The courtroom deputy will enter a viewable remark in CM/ECF to correspond to the action taken by the Clerk’s Office.

May 2, 2012

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA

In re:

Case Number

Case Name

Chapter
Section

Instructions to Clerk Regarding Document under Seal

The undersigned asks the Clerk of Court to handle the document under seal as follows:

(List only one.)

RETURN DOCUMENT SEALED TO ME _____

DESTROY DOCUMENT UNDER SEAL _____

Respectfully submitted,

Attorney & Bar Number

Law Firm

Street Address

City, State and Zip Code

E-mail address

Phone Number